

REMARKS

Favorable consideration of this patent application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 13 have been cancelled, and Claims 25-36 have been inserted. Consequently, Claims 2-12 and 14-36 are now active in this patent application.

This patent application has been amended in light of the previous prosecution of United States Patent Application Serial Number 10/394,191. During the course of such prosecution, the various claims of that application were rejected in light of the variously noted prior art, and accordingly, it is respectfully submitted to the examiner that the present invention, as now claimed in new Claims 25 and 31,

comprises a plurality of seam plates which are fixedly mounted upon a substrate so as to form an integral entity product therewith, and wherein the substrate has a first predetermined lateral extent or dimension as defined between opposite side edge portions thereof, and the seam plates have second lateral extents or dimensions which are not greater than the lateral extent or dimension of the substrate. This permits the seam plates to be encompassed internally within the substrates when, for example, the substrate is fabricated as a flattened tubular member, as illustrated within **FIGURE 4**, or when the substrate is fabricated as a pair of mated sheet members. This is quite different from the system of Beller wherein the fastening surfaces 45 are fixedly mounted upon the substrate, wherein it is seen that the fastening surfaces 45 have lateral or transverse extents substantially greater than that of the substrate. It is therefore submitted that Claims 25 and 31 patentably define over Beller. The amendments to the specification now sets forth this relationship between the seam plates and the substrate, based upon the disclosure, for example, of **FIGURES 2-5**, and therefore, such subject matter is NOT in fact new matter.

In addition, it is respectfully noted that Hasan et al. does not disclose a tubular substrate within which the seam plates are fixed by heat sealed regions such that the seam plates and the substrate form the integral product entity. In Hasan et al., for example, the seam plate 122 is fixedly secured to the insulation slab or panel 118 by means of a suitable fastener 120 with a right end section 124 of a membrane sheet 126 trapped beneath the seam plate 122. An extended portion 125 of the right end section 124 of the membrane sheet 126 is then folded over the top of the seam plate 122 such that a free end portion 128 is secured to the membrane 126 by means of a heat-sealed region 138. Therefore, the seam plate 122 is not fixed to the substrate but is only enveloped therein. Still yet further, while Boushek et al. may disclose a coiled substrate or plastic sheet or strip, such reference does not rectify the deficiencies noted hereinabove in connection with Beller and Hasan et al. It is therefore submitted that Claims 25 and 31 patentably define over all of the art of record.

Lastly, the examiner noted during a telephone in-

terview with the undersigned Attorney of Record, during the prosecution of the aforementioned patent application, that it would be obvious to place a washer around the screws of Hubbard et al. so as to meet the claimed limitations of Claims 25 and 31. It is respectfully submitted that such would NOT in fact anticipate or render obvious the claimed subject matter of Claims 25 and 31. Firstly, there are no teachings for placing washers around the screws of Hubbard et al. Secondly, if washers were placed around the screws of Hubbard et al., they would not be secured to the substrates in accordance with the teachings of Hubbard et al. Thirdly, there are no teachings within Hubbard et al., or any of the other prior art of record, of fabricating the seam plates so as to have the predetermined lateral dimensions which are not greater than the lateral dimensions of the substrates upon which the seam plates are to be secured.

In light of the foregoing, it is submitted that this patent application is now in condition for examination on the merits, and therefore, an early and favorable action

is now anticipated and awaited.

Respectfully Submitted,
SCHWARTZ & WEINRIEB



Steven W. Weinrieb
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 26,520
(703) 415-1250